

**Remarks by Ambassador James Zumwalt**  
**Regional Consultation on Risk Management interventions for Highly Pathogenic Avian**  
**Influenza (HPAI)**  
**Hotel Fleur de Lys, Plateau**  
**Wednesday, December 15th, 2015**

*(As prepared)*

Mr. Minister of Livestock and Animal Production,  
Representatives of FAO, OIE, African Union IBAR , Distinguished guests.

I am pleased to participate in this important regional meeting on risk management interventions for Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza prevention and control.

Although I am not an expert on avian influenza, I do recognize the importance of this topic, and of the significance of your work. Your collaboration will promote a global approach to health security.

This is why I am excited to see industry and government from 11 West and Central African countries today participating in this discussion on prevention and control. A private-public partnership, such as this one, is critical to identifying practical disease control measures.

It is in this spirit of participation, cooperation and partnership that I would like to recognize the fruitful collaboration between the Food and Agriculture Organization – Emergency Center for Transboundary Animal Diseases (FAO-ECTAD), the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA APHIS), and the many other contributors to the Resepi and Resolab surveillance and diagnostic laboratory networks. Starting in 2006, these networks were created, developed and ultimately turned over to the regional economic cooperative communities ECOWAS and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS).

Last month, APHIS Administrator Kevin Shea awarded Dr. Charles Bebay and Dr. Cheikh Fall, APHIS' highest award for their leadership at Resepi and Resolab. Gentlemen, congratulations! Before I invite Dr. Karen Sliter, from APHIS' Regional Office in Brussels to the podium to join me in presenting these awards, please join me in thanking our hosts of this workshop which will further our continued work together on Avian Influenza prevention and control.

Thank you for your time and hard work.